GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:150
ANSWERED ON:28.11.2002
WITHDRAWAL OF FORCES
K. KARUNAKARAN;RAMDAS RUPALA GAVIT

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Defence forces stationed along the entire border with Pakistan after December 13, 2001, have been completely withdrawn;

(b) if so, whether discernible changes in the border situation were noticed which necessitated the withdrawal of forces;

(c) the steps taken by the Government to remove the land mines from the border areas; and

(d) the time by which the entire border with Pakistan is likely to be freed from land mines?

Answer

MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES)

(a) to (d): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 150 FOR 28.11.2002

The mobilization of the Armed Forces exerted military pressure on Pakistan and forced the Pakistan President to denounce support to `jihad` through his speeches of 12th January and 27th May 2002. Some of the terrorist organizations in Pakistan were banned, some terrorists camps in Pak Occupied Kashmir were closed, their accounts frozen and leaders arrested. The infiltration this year has come down considerably compared to the figures of corresponding period of the previous year. The election to the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly was successfully conducted in September & October 2002 despite terrorist violence & intimidation. The mobilization focussed the attention of the international community on Pakistan as a state sponsoring terrorism, thereby pressurizing Pakistan to shun cross border terrorism. The experience gained during the mobilization has enabled the Army to reassess and revalidate its operational plans and procedures.

The Cabinet Committee on Security, in its meeting held on 16.10.2002 deliberated upon and examined all aspects of the continued deployment of our forces along the border, and decided that as the Armed Forces have, with great distinction, achieved the objectives assigned to them, thus upholding all the traditions of the Indian military, they now be asked to redeploy from positions on the international border with Pakistan, without impairing their capacity to respond decisively to any emergency. There will be no lowering of the vigil in Jammu and Kashmir.

Plans have been drawn up for clearance operations to remove mines laid on the internantional Border during OP PARAKRAM, and the requisite number of troops will remain deployed till the mine clearance operations are completed.